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To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I am strongly against the current proposed settlement for this case. There are good ideas in the settlement, particularly the requirement for Microsoft to open up their standards to the world - but in other parts, as most people full well know, there are loopholes that would make it trivial for them to avoid doing this. Below are my thoughts on what needs to be done.

As earlier judgements have shown, Microsoft has had a history of bullying out competitors with nasty business practices and when that fails, playing dirty with software compatibility. A few examples are the open Kerberos specification Microsoft recently picked up, the unix Samba service and Caldera's Dr. DOS. Dr. DOS took a thorough assault from intentional incompatibilities Microsoft introduced into Windows 3.1 and Samba is a major unix<->windows interoperability tool that is finding it increasingly difficult to keep up with changing secret Microsoft specifications. It is clear that Microsoft is taking full advantage of the monopoly position the proprietary Windows system has to extend its way into new marketplaces and lock users into Microsoft products. Their primary tool to do this is secret standards that prevent other sources from creating products that are compatible with Windows. What I propose is an **enforceable** - **enforceable** penalty that forces Microsoft to open up the internals of its operating system. Not the source code, but information on how the different parts of Windows communicate internally and the protocols with which Windows machines communicate across networks. Microsoft should also make it possible for independent developers to communicate with Windows in the same way Microsoft's own code does. This would prevent any more casualties in what many call Microsoft's "embrace and extend" war and would offer the benefit of new competition by destroying the unbearable artificial costs of entry and survival in this market that Microsoft has kept off-limits through incompatibility. They should have to produce this information in a timely manner - say one month for existing specifications and also provide advanced release of new specifications before a Microsoft product update. This way, when they do make changes to try and subvert a competitor's product, that competitor will be able to update and remain compatible. This is key to any effective judgement, especially the enforceability part!

Sincerely,
Lindsay K. Pallickal